

10
Pam.
China



Sao-Ye

ADDRESS
OF HIS EXCELLENCY
ALFRED SZE

MINISTER FROM CHINA
TO THE UNITED STATES

GIVEN BEFORE THE
CHINA SOCIETY OF AMERICA
AT A DINNER IN THE
WALDORF-ASTORIA HOTEL
NEW YORK CITY

SEPTEMBER
NINETEEN TWENTY-ONE



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
Columbia University Libraries

<https://archive.org/details/addressofalfreds00szes>

THE ADDRESS

IT is with great pleasure and appreciation that I appear before you this evening as the official representative of the Republic of China. Certainly it is a happy augury for the future when an organization in America can attract together so many leaders from the various walks of life who are interested in the welfare and future of another country—my country—the Republic of China. It was Mr. John Hay, the author of the Open Door Policy who made the statement that

“Whoever understands China socially, politically, economically, and religiously, holds the key to the world’s politics for the next five centuries.”

A few days ago I was reading an article in one of your leading magazines about the coming conference in Washington and in this article I found the following paragraph:

“The American Government wishes to define the Open Door in such terms that foreigners in China will get the minimum of exclusive monopolistic privileges and the maximum of open trade chances. That definition suits our American needs in China and by the mercy of God it also suits the needs of China.”

Now that was a rather cynical way of stating the fact that the doctrine of the Open Door means the same to a citizen of the Republic of China as it means to a citizen of the United States of America. I sincerely believe that when we search into the innermost thoughts of our two peoples the inspiration of the Open Door means the same thing on both sides of the Pacific. When we speak of the Open Door we speak the same language. Therefore China is fighting for the same principle that America is fighting for—The Open Door of Equal Opportunity! I believe

that the word "Shantung" stirs the same emotions in the hearts of our two peoples. The statement has been made that America's sole interest in China is due to the desire for trade. We in China know differently. Our people know that America has put back into China many times the amount of treasure that the American merchants have taken out in profits.

And while I am on the subject of trade I might mention to you that last week I talked to an American merchant who had travelled all over the world. He told me that China offered the best field, in fact, practically the only free undeveloped field, left where the American merchant had a chance to dispose of his products. Since this is a practical era, let us be practical and recognize the essentials, the industrial essentials that are necessary for strength to maintain our principles.

I have been reading a new book dealing with the Far East that was compiled by Mr. MacMurray, the chief of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs of the State Department at Washington. The preface to this book was written by Dr. James Brown Scott, the director of the Division of International Law of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Here I found these statements:

"It is a source of pleasure to the good people of these United States, that the policy of their government has invariably been one of sympathetic interest in and toward the Far East and that it has never sought to make of the needs and distress of the peoples of Japan and China, a source of profit."

Dr. Scott then tells the story of the return of the Boxer Indemnity surplus to China as an example of American altruism and points to the significant fact that there were no strings attached to the return of this large sum of money, and he prints a letter from Prince Ch'ing of the Chinese Foreign Office, dated June 14, 1908, proving that China's

decision to use the Indemnity money in educating her youth in this country was entirely voluntary. It is unnecessary for me to tell you, ladies and gentlemen who are familiar with the Orient, any more about the Chinese Boxer Indemnity, but there is another incident in America's contact with another country of the Orient that is just as significant though not so well known. I refer to an indemnity which America, in association with France, Great Britain and Holland, exacted from Japan in 1863 on account of the expenses incurred in opening up the Straits of Shimonoseki. Dr. Scott quotes from an account of this incident as follows:

“The sum paid the United States remained in the treasury unused for twenty years. The public conscience was troubled as to the justness of the exaction, and in 1883 by an act of Congress the amount was returned to Japan, and accepted by that government ‘as a strong manifestation of that spirit of justice and equity which has always animated the United States in its relations with Japan.’”

Dr. Scott closes his introduction to Mr. MacMurray's excellent book with the following significant words to which I, as Chinese Minister, most heartily subscribe:

“——the United States has invariably framed its policy in such a way that it should be just to China—to speak specifically of this one country—that the policy of China should be just to the United States, and that the door of opportunity should be open to the United States and to all other countries upon a footing of equality.”

Chinese friendship for America is proverbial and is based upon many things, entirely too many to enumerate in this brief discussion. The old treaty between China and the United States of 1858 was an example of your altruism and a novel departure from the ordinary agreements which China made or was forced to make with other nations. Article 1 of the Treaty of 1858 reads:

“There shall be, as there has always been, peace and friendship between the United States of America and the Ta Tsing Empire and their people respectively. They shall not insult or oppress each other for any trifling cause so as to produce an estrangement between them, and if any other nation should act unjustly or oppressively, the United States will exert their good offices, on being informed of the case, to bring about an amicable arrangement of the question, thus showing their friendly feelings.”

Now this treaty with China was not an isolated incident. Just about a month later, or on July 29, 1858, the United States negotiated a treaty with the Japanese Government and this treaty contains a similar clause. These old treaties show clearly the position of the United States with respect to China and Japan as a common friend of both countries. It stands always ready to see that justice is done to both, and to lend a helping hand when appealed to.

I need not go into details regarding the American missionary and educational endeavor in China which has extended over so long a period and which has reached its culmination in the great Rockefeller medical institution in Peking which has just been dedicated. There are very few persons, indeed, among the millions who have not been touched, directly or indirectly, by this glorious uplifting touch of American altruism.

We are at the threshold of a great event, an event of untold significance to the future of our two countries—in fact of the whole world—the Conference on the Limitation of Armament and Pacific-Far Eastern Problems. China has accepted the invitation to the Conference wholeheartedly and without reservation, believing implicitly in the good faith and altruistic intentions of America in seeking to bring about through peaceful discussion a settlement of outstanding questions, which, if not settled amicably, are likely to throw the world again into the gloom of armed conflict.

China wants nothing from this Conference except the right to preserve its national existence and the uninterrupted pursuit of happiness in fellowship with the other nations of the world! She enters the Conference with "amity to all and enmity to none."

I am told that there have been some whisperings as to the motives behind this call for the Conference. What is America trying to do? is the question. China does not join in this misgiving, because China's experience gained by actual dealings with America has been confirmed by America's dealings with other countries and peoples.

I might refer to your work in Cuba. You gave your wealth and blood to liberate the Cuban people from autocratic foreign control and you spent more of your millions in giving the people of Cuba a sanitary bill of health and a modern form of government; then you got out and didn't even present the Cuban people with a bill covering the cost of the war or the sanitary system. Furthermore, you constantly stand ready to lend further assistance. You didn't quibble over the terms of getting out—you got out and the lesson has not been lost on the world. Your example in Cuba will always be a living force in the world.

It will require several years before there is a real understanding of the changes wrought in Asia by the European War. There were, of course, material changes in transfers of territory and rights and privileges of peoples from one authority to another with no regard for the people concerned, that will have to be rectified before we can have anything remotely approaching peace. But the real significant changes wrought by the world war in Asia are not apparent on the surface. The changes that I refer to are in the minds of the people and as such are the most significant of all. The people of Asia, and I refer especially to my own people are being stirred by new thoughts and ideas and ambitions. In many respects they are casting about in their minds to find out just what Western civilization means. You would be astonished

to know the modern books that are being read and discussed by the thousands of students in my country. In certain respects these young men and women are standing intellectually at a turn in the road of learning and advancement. Which way shall we turn? Shall our future development take the road that leads to militaristic power as the only solution of our troubles; or shall we follow the smoother road that leads to peaceful democratic development? We have two teachers who are holding out the two doctrines and beckoning for us to follow.

There are two ways of securing supplies from China; a good way and a bad way, a way that will develop China and a way that will prevent development indefinitely. From the date of your first treaty with China and even before that when the first contact of our two peoples began, your policy toward Asia has been one of helpfulness. This is just as true with Japan, as it has been with China, Siberia or the Philippines.

I believe that you have the confidence of the people of Asia as it is possessed by no other outside nation. Most surely you have the good will of our Chinese millions to an almost unbounded extent. The good will of four hundred millions of people is a wonderful asset in this troubled world and on our side we consider the good will of your hundred and ten millions as our most important haven in a stormy sea. America is in a wonderful position to bring about better conditions in the Pacific. China wants and needs America's help but she wants it to be American in fact as well as in name and not something hard and sinister underneath and merely camouflaged as America on top.

China stands ready to meet America more than half way in a solution of many of the problems of the Pacific and in a correct solution of these problems. No other nations or peoples need have any misgivings, for the Open Door means equality of opportunity for all.